

COMMUNITY HEALTHY ACTIVITIES MODEL PROGRAM FOR SENIORS II (CHAMPS II)

PROGRAM MANUAL

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Introduction

Overview

The Community Healthy Activities Model Program for Seniors (CHAMPS) is an inclusive, choice-based physical activity promotion program to increase the lifetime physical activity levels of seniors. The program utilizes a public-health approach, targeting community-dwelling sedentary and underactive adults aged 65 and older with a broad range of health problems. The central premise of the program is that physical activity has benefits for everyone regardless of age and health status.

The program supports and encourages participants to develop a balanced exercise regimen (endurance, strength training, flexibility, balance, and coordination). This can include taking part in physical activity classes and programs in their community or exercising on their own. Participants are encouraged to develop a regimen that takes into account their health problems, activity preferences, abilities, interests, available resources, readiness to change and other factors. Using a client-centered approach, participants explore ways to motivate themselves, overcome barriers, and exercise safely. Emphasis is placed on personal choice and progressing at their own pace.

CHAMPS Research

CHAMPS II was designed by researchers at the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF) and Stanford University to increase the physical activity level of sedentary and underactive adults aged 65 years and older. It grew out of an earlier program, CHAMPS I, which referred participants to existing classes and programs.

Information on CHAMPS research can be found at www.ucsf.edu/champs/

The CHAMPS II physical activity promotion program is based mainly on social cognitive theory, and utilizes principles of self-efficacy enhancement, readiness to change, and motivational strategies. Both CHAMPS programs were successful in increasing physical activity. All publications and information about CHAMPS research are available on the CHAMPS website.

CHAMPS II Program Goals

Intermediate Goals

- To encourage and support the efforts of sedentary and underactive older adults who wish to obtain health benefits through increased physical activity
- To motivate participants who are reluctant or uncommitted to exercise to increase their activity level by helping them resolve ambivalence
- To encourage participants to develop a balanced physical activity regimen that focuses on endurance, strength training, flexibility, balance, and coordination

Long-Term Goal

- To significantly increase participants' overall physical activity levels through taking part in structured and unstructured physical activities of light to moderate intensity

Physical Activity Support Mechanisms

Introduction

This section presents details about the five mechanisms we used to support participants in their efforts to increase physical activity:

- Personal planning session
- Telephone support
- Group workshops
- Newsletters
- Activity logs

As noted above, CHAMPS is a client-centered, self-management program. A PA counselor is assigned to each participant and bears responsibility for the long-term interaction between the participant and the program, but participants make personal choices about their physical activities and goals. The support mechanisms are designed to encourage participants to find personally meaningful goals and to provide motivation, encouragement, and reinforcement for successful changes in activity, no matter how slow the progress. Participants are only required to attend the personal planning session, to receive telephone calls, and to complete activity logs (for two weeks of every month). PA counselors strongly encourage participants to attend the initial workshops that cover exercise safety and getting started; other workshops are optional based on their interest.

Physical Activity Support Mechanism: Personal Planning Session

Purpose

- To enroll and randomize participants into intervention and wait-list control group.
- To discuss participants' needs, concerns, and preferences based on their readiness to increase their level of physical activity
- To establish a relationship between the physical activity counselors and participants
- To motivate participants to attend the first workshop and to discuss details of the program
- To individualize initial plans based on discussion of participants' needs, concerns, and preferences
- To set an initial short-term goal for participants based on their readiness to increase their level of physical activity
- To briefly review two exercise booklets that are given to participants

Program Folders for Counselors

Participants were assigned to specific PA counselors based on their medical needs and schedules. Participants with complicated medical histories (conditions other than controlled hypertension or arthritis) were assigned to the exercise physiologist for activity support.